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A ROMANCE OF THE ORIENT

BY

PERCY MACKAYE

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
CLAYTON HAMILTON

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1914

"Here in China the world lies a-dream, like a thousand Years ago, and the place of our dreams is eternal"

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TO

HERMANN HAGEDORN

Singer of flashing swords
Lover of olden songs
Miming Romance, seductive Adventure
Amorous Magic, improvised Comedy
And all the love-charming, blood-thirsty
Enchantments
Our prosy old workaday world has lost wind of"

7050

THE AUTHOR

Percy MacKaye, the author of this play, was bor in New York City, March 16, 1875 — a son of Steel MacKaye. He graduated from Harvard with th class of 1897 and shortly afterward spent two yea in Italy and at the University of Leipzig. In 190 he joined the Cornish (New Hampshire) Colon and has since devoted himself to literary an dramatic work. He is a member of the Nation Institute of Arts and Letters.

Following is a list of his published works:

THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS: A Comedy.
THE CANTERBURY TALES OF CHAUCER.
FENRIS, THE WOLF: A Tragedy.
JEANNE D'ARC: A Tragedy.
SAPPHO AND PHAON: A Tragedy.
THE SCARECROW: A Tragedy of the Ludicrou
LINCOLN CENTENARY ODE.
MATER: An American Study in Comedy.
THE PLAYHOUSE AND THE PLAY. Essays.
A GARLAND TO SYLVIA: A Comedy.
ANTI-MATRIMONY: A Satirical Comedy.
YANKEE FANTASIES. Five One-Act Plays.
TO-MORROW. A Play in Three Acts.
POEMS.
URIEL, AND OTHER POEMS
THE CIVIC THEATRE.
SANCTUARY: A Bird Masque.
A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

riginal Cast of the Play as first produced in Boston, at the Shubert Theatre, December 1, 1913

WILLIAM A. BRADY (Ltd.)

PRESENTS

A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

A Romance of the Orient

BY

PERCY MACKAYE

"Here in China, the world lies a-dream, like a thousand Years ago, and the place of our dreams is eternal."

(The play is an original comedy, suggested by the Persian romance in "The Thousand and One Tales," wherein is recited the adventures of [illegible], Prince of Astrakhan, and the beautiful Princess of China.)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Asiatic

TRANDOT, Princess of Pekin ..... Rita Jolivet
LTOUM, her father, Emperor ..... Frederick Warde
ELIMA, her slave ..... Fania Marinoff
ALAF, Prince of Astrakhan ..... Jerome Patrick
ARAK, his servitor ..... Frank McCormack
HANG, Eunuch ..... Edmund Roth

European

CARAMOUCHE, PUNCHINELLO, PANTALOON, HARLEQUIN } Vagabond Players from Italy ... Sheldon Lewis, Bennett Kilpack, Allen Thomas, Joseph Smith
CAPOCOMICO, their leader ..... H. Cooper Cliffe

Lords of the Royal Divan

Hugh Nixon, John P. Savage, Anthony Romack, Reginald Simpson

Beggars

William H. Dupont and W. Bradley Ward

SOLDIERS OF PEKIN

David Earle, Charles Muche, Thomas Edwards, Joseph Reed, Howa
Jackson, Carl Textoris, Joseph Weston, James Bannister

TEA BEARERS

Franklin Montgomery and John Leons

COURT ATTENDANTS

Philip Sheridan and Robert W. Gest

FEMALE ATTENDANTS

Marie Benton, Daisy Miller, Ruth Pierson, Constance Howard,
Elsie Oates and Sybil Maitland

SCENES

ACT I

City Gate at Pekin

ACT II

Scene 1: Room in the Imperial Harem
Scene 2: Great Hall of the Emperor

ACT III

Scene 1: Turandot's Dream
(1) The Mountains
(2) A Street
Scene 2: Anteroom of the Harem
Scene 3: Calaf's Bedchamber

ACT IV

Great Hall of the Emperor. (The same as Act II, Scene 2)

Play produced under the direction of Mr. J. C. Huffman

Interpretative music composed by William Furst

EXECUTIVE STAFF

Tarkington Baker ..... Manag
Frederick Schader ..... Business Manag
Frank McCormack ..... Stage Direct
William W. Brown, W. Bradley Ward ..... Stage Manage
William Furst ..... Musical Direct

PREFACE

The present play is an original comedy, of which tain elements in the plot have been suggested by old Persian tale which is the theme of the eighnth century Italian comedy "Turandotte," by rlo Gozzi, translated into German by Friedrich iller.

t is not a revision or rewriting of that work.

t is an entirely new play.

Since, however, some modern productions have retly been made in Germany, England and America, der the title of "Turandot," it is fitting to make ar the relation which my play bears to those and he older productions of Gozzi and Schiller.

n January, 1762, "Turandotte" by Carlo Gozzi s first acted by the Sacchi company of players Venice. It was one of a number of "improvised nedies" — or *Commedie dell' Arte Improvisata* composed by Gozzi in his single-handed artistic against the more naturalistic works of Goldoni, contemporary.

The plots of these comedies, or *Fiabe*, were d
rived from nursery or folk-tales. They were act
by masked, or semi-masked players. Their te
nique was based on the old Italian form of *scena*
This form is described by John Addington Symon
in the Preface to his "Memories of Count Ca
Gozzi," as follows:

"Comparative study of these *scenari* shows th
the whole comedy was planned out, divided in
acts and scenes, the parts of the several persona
described in prose, their entrances and exits
dicated, and what they had to do laid down
detail. The execution was left to the actors; a
it is difficult to form a correct conception of
acted play from the dry bones of its *ossatura*. 'O
one thing afflicts me,' said our Marston in the Pref
to his *Malcontent:* 'to think that scenes inven
merely to be spoken, should be inforcively publis
to be read.' And again in his Preface to the *Fau*
'Comedies are writ to be spoken, not read; reme
ber the life of these things consists in action.'
that was true of pieces composed in dialogue
an English playwright of the Elizabethan age, how
more true is it of the skeletons of comedies, wh
avowedly owed their force and spirit to extempo

us talent! Reading them, we feel that we viewing the machine of stakes and irons ch a sculptor sets up before he begins to mould figure of an athlete or a goddess in plastic y.

The *scenario*, like the *plat* described for us by lone and Collier, was hung up behind the stage. ery actor referred to it while the play went for- rd, refreshing his memory with what he had to resent, and attending to his entrances."

Written as *scenari* Gozzi's acted *Fiabe* were emi- tly successful in their day, and established his rks as models of a dramatic taste which, toward last of the eighteenth century, it became the ire of cultivated Germans to introduce into their n country.

With this object in view, Goethe and Schiller ected "Turandotte" as a foreign comedy worthy be translated and adapted for production at the imar Theatre. Accordingly Schiller recast in tic form a German version of Gozzi's play, made Werthes, and produced it at Weimar, in honor of birthday of the Grand Duchess, wife of Karl gust, on January 30, 1804. In details of this re- ting he was assisted by Goethe.

The attempt, however, thus to "elevate the ta
of the German public" was not successful.

More than one hundred years later, Dr. M
Reinhardt produced in Berlin a play based on Sc
ler's "Turandot" made by Karl Voellmueller.
1912 an English translation of this version by Jet
Bithell was produced in America by the Shub
Theatrical Company, and after a brief run on
road was withdrawn from the stage. In Janua
1913, it was also produced for a short run in Lon
by Sir George Alexander.

Considering the version as it stood to be in n
of changes for their purposes, the owners of
American rights requested me to suggest and m
the changes. To this I replied that to make alte
tions or adaptations of the version did not app
to me, but if the owners would like to give me en
freedom to write a new and original play on
theme of the Persian folk-tale used by Gozzi s
able to the scenic settings of Reinhardt's producti
I should be glad to do so. This freedom
courteously given, and the present play was writ
in the late spring and early summer of this y
and placed in rehearsal in October.

In writing my play, then, I have used for my c

rposes the folk-tale material treated differently
Gozzi, and in so doing I have entirely recon-
ved the story and its situations, omitting many
aracters of the old tale, introducing and creating
eral new ones, and characterizing all from a fresh
ndpoint.*

The chief male character of my play, for instance,
pocomico, is wholly new. The name is that
ich was given to the director or choregus of the
Italian troupes of the *Commedia dell' Arte*,
ncerning which Symonds writes in his Preface
ore referred to:

'The Choregus was usually the Capo Comico, or
first actor and manager of the company. He
pressed his comrades with a certain unity of tone,
ought out the talents of promising comedians,
arged one part, curtailed another, and squared
piece to be performed with the capacities he
ld control. 'When a new play has to be given,'
s another writer on this subject, 'the first actor
ls the troupe together in the morning. He reads

*Since the date of the commission for my play, the translation "Turandot" by Jethro Bithell has been published in America Duffield & Company, New York, so that the Gozzi-Schiller-Voell-eller dramatic version of the folk-tale is thus made available for glish readers.

them out the plot, and explains every detail of intrigue. In short, he acts the whole piece bef them, points out to each player what his spe business requires, indicates the customary sal of wit and traits of humor, and shows how the seve parts and talents of the actors can be best combi into a striking work of scenic art.' "

The four "Maskers" of my play, followers Capocomico, are, of course, my own renderings the types familiar to the old Italian comedies.

For their dialogue in the introductory scene this modern comedy in English, I have inven for them (or rather made use of, for the first ti for modern actors) a form of spoken verse suggest perhaps of the voluble, capricious, unnaturali spirit of fantasy common to them: embodied esp ially in their leader and spokesman, Capocomico.

Needless to say, "A Thousand Years Ago" torically speaking, there were no disciples of school of *la Commedia dell'Arte* to invade old Chi but fantasy and comedy are older (and young than the schools. As Capocomico himself rema to Punchinello:

> "Here is China the world lies a-dream, like a thousand Years ago, and the place of our dreams is eternal."

To the stage production of the play Mr. J. C. ffman has brought the admirable powers of his al directorship.

The theatrical rights are owned and reserved by e Shubert Theatrical Company, of New York.

PERCY MACKAYE.

CORNISH, NEW HAMPSHIRE, November, 1913.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The author, in his preface, has explained the pedi-
e of "*A Thousand Years Ago.*" It is the chief
vantage of long pedigrees that they allure us from
contemplation of the present to the investigation
he past; and, for students of dramatic literature,
haps the most important feature of this present
y is that the tracing of its ancestry leads us back
one of the most interesting periods in the history
he theatre.

n his quotations from John Addington Symonds,
great English authority on the Renaissance in
ly, Mr. MacKaye has already set before us the
in features of the *Commedia dell' Arte Improvisata*,
ch flourished in Italy for several centuries; but a
additional notes may be appended for the benefit
hose who wish to extend their study of this type
lrama. Two books upon the subject are readily
essible and may be strongly recommended. One
these is the "*Histoire du Théatre Italien*" by
is Riccoboni, and the other is a volume entitled
asques et Bouffons" by Maurice Sand, the son of

Georges Sand, the famous novelist. Both of the books contain interesting illustrations of the sto characters in Italian comedy; and the pictures "*Masques et Bouffons*" are reproduced in colors.

The *Commedia dell' Arte* attained its climax abo the year 1600, but its career was extended well alo into the eighteenth century by the interested activi of the very fertile and very popular playwrigh Carlo Gozzi. The essential feature of this type drama was that the lines were improvised by t actors as they worked their way through the scen of an intrigue which had been carefully plotted advance. Throughout the seventeenth centu in Italy, the general public showed little patien with the *Commedia Erudita* (the phrase may translated into contemporary slang as "High-br drama"), in which the lines were written out by man of letters and repeated by the actors parr wise. Such plays, though they might have be composed by poets as eminent as Torquato Tas were condemned by the populace because th lacked what seemed the essential element of spo taneity. It will not be difficult for us to understa the attitude of the Italian public toward this d tinction, if we apply a similar test to our own co

porary art of after-dinner speaking. We de-
d of our after-dinner speakers that they shall
their phrases as they go along, and we respond
dulness to a speech that has been evidently
ten out and learned by rote. The president of
of our great American universities has been
ed as saying that any professor who writes and
ns a lecture is merely insulting the printing-
s; there can be no advantage in speaking on a
ect unless the speaking be spontaneous: and
was the attitude of the old Italian public toward
actors that addressed it from the stage.

single set sufficed for most of the improvised
an comedies. This set represented a public
re in an Italian town, a meeting-point of several
ets; and the houses of the leading characters
solidly built with doors and windows fronting
he square. With the action set in such a public
e, the playwright could experience no embar-
ment in motivating his entrances and exits; any
acters could meet at any time in the neutral
nd of the stage; and the practicable doors and
lows of the surrounding houses could be em-
ed by acrobatic actors in the exhibition of
ing scenes of elopement or of robbery.

One of the most definitive features of the *C*
media dell' Arte was the fact that, though the pl
presented differed greatly from each other in subj
matter and in plot, they invariably employed
same set of characters. The individual actor
peared in many different plays, wearing always
same costume and the same mask. Harlequin m
love to Columbine in play after play; the Doc
from Bologna University, repeated the same sor
pedantries in plot after plot; and the Captain S
vento (a lineal descendant of the *Miles Gloriosu*
Plautus) swaggered through story after st
Individual actors became so completely identi
with the stock characters they assumed upon
stage that they bore in private life the conventi
names of their impersonations. A letter is ext
which was sent by Henry Fourth of France
gallant Henri Quatre of Navarre) to a famous a
of Italy inviting him to bring his company to Pa
and this letter is simply addressed to Harleq
since the royal patron had no knowledge of
actor's actual name. Similarly, the famous S
ramuccia from whom the immortal Molière lear
the rudiments of his craft as a comedian — an a
described in a rhymed chronicle of the time as

des comédiens et le comédien de rois" — has come
n to us in history under the title of Scaramouche,
no recollection of his parental name.

he modern stage exhibits many analogies to this
tification of an actor with a single *rôle*. For
ance, in the old days of the association of Weber
Fields, these comedians always appeared in
isely the same parts, regardless of any difference
ubject-matter in the comic scenes that they pre-
ed. Mr. Weber invariably depicted a fat little
who was easily gullible; and the leaner and
e strenuous Mr. Fields was forever getting the
er of him and using him as a butt for ridiculous
ecution. At the present time, Mr. William Col-
approaches very nearly the method of the old
ian actors. Regardless of the particular points
ny play in which he chooses to appear, he always
esents precisely the same character — a peren-
dramatization of his individual traits as a come-
; and he also habitually exercises the Italian
r's license of improvisation in the presence of an
mbled audience.

ve of these standard acting types of the *Com-
a dell' Arte* are revivified by Mr. MacKaye in
ew play on Gozzi's old theme. The most inter-

esting figure is the Capocomico — the leader of *troupe*, who devises the *scenari* of the plays wh they present and rehearses the other actors in business of their respective parts. This creatio the author's is an evocation of a famous figure f a nigh-forgotten page of the storied past of theatre, and may serve easily as a starting p for a series of very interesting researches un taken by individual students of the history of drama.

Though Mr. MacKaye's play has been wri appropriately in English verse, aptly varied in forms to be spoken by the modern actor, the rea should remember that this drama is designed appeal more emphatically to the eye than to ear. It should be regarded as a modification of t type of Decorative Drama which was exhibited Professor Reinhardt in his masterly productio the pantomime of "*Sumurûn*." For his backgrou Mr. MacKaye has chosen an old tale of the Arab Nights which is hung before the eye as a fanta bit of oriental tapestry; and in the foreground has exhibited in *silhouette* the sharper colors of prancing figures of his group of Italian comedian

More subtly, this play may be conceived a

arabolic comment on a problem of the theatre at
ie present time. The histrionic disciples of Carlo
ozzi, the eighteenth century champion of tradi-
onal romance, are depicted as having lost their
ght in Venice against the dramatist Goldoni, who,
a follower of Molière, was regarded at that time
the leader of the realistic movement; and, des-
iring of being accepted any longer in the country
their birth, these romantic outcasts have sought
fuge in the distant orient, an orient to be considered
no sense as historic or realistic, but as purely
ntastic. At the present time, our theatre has
een conquered (for the moment) by sedulous re-
rders of the deeds of here and now; we find the
ama in the throes of a new realism, more potent in
s actuality than the tentative and groping realism
Goldoni; and our romantic playwrights, like these
d adventurous and tattered histrions of Carlo
ozzi, have recently sought refuge in the fabulous
id eye-enchanting orient. Hence the success, in
cent seasons, of such romantic compositions as
Kismet" and "*Sumurûn*" and "*The Yellow Jacket.*"
o escape from the obsession of Broadway and the
rand we now turn eagerly to the gorgeous east,
st as these discarded comedians of Gozzi's sought

a new success within the enchanting and allur
gates of the city of Pekin.

Furthermore, by restoring to our stage the
European tradition of masks in his group of "M
kers," Mr. MacKaye flings a prophetic shaft in t
age-long tourney between symbolism and naturali
in the arts of the theatre.

CLAYTON HAMILTON.

A THOUSAND YEARS AGO

A Thousand Years Ago

CHARACTERS

Asiatic

TURANDOT . . .	Princess of Pekin
ALTOUM . . .	Her father, Emperor
ZELIMA	Her slave
CALAF	Prince of Astrakhan
BARAK	His servitor
CHANG	Eunuch

European

SCARAMOUCHE . .	Vagabond Players from Italy
PUNCHINELLO . .	
PANTALOON . . .	
HARLEQUIN [Mute]	
CAPOCOMICO . .	Their leader

SCENES

Act I.

City Gate at Pekin.

Act II.

Scene 1: Room in the Imperial Harem.
Scene 2: Great Hall of the Emperor.

Act III.

Scene 1: Anteroom of Harem.
Scene 2: Calaf's Bedchamber.

Act IV.

Great Hall of the Emperor.
[The same as Act II, Scene 2.]

ACT FIRST

ACT FIRST

Outside a city gate, at Pekin.

Above the gate, in a row, severed heads of young men impaled on stakes. On the wall, at one side, more ds of older men, with grizzled locks, stare down: ong them, conspicuous, one with a white beard.

It is early morning; the sun just rising.

The gate is closed.

From behind is heard barbaric martial music.

Outside, from the right, drums roll, and Chinese liers enter, accompanied by a few beggars and peas- s.

Pausing before the gate, they sound a trumpet.

The gate is opened and they pass within, followed by except two beggars, a young man and a middle aged.

The gate remains open.

The middle-aged beggar points upward at the head h the white beard.

The younger starts, and prostrates himself beneath with a deep cry.

Outside, on the left, a twanging of stringed instr
ments sounds faint but merry. It draws nearer, a
quickly the players come running on — five tattere
motley vagabonds in masks: Scaramouche, Harlequi
Punchinello, Pantaloon and Capocomico.

The last, leading them with his baton, stops in t
gateway, before which Harlequin executes a ballet-st
dance, while Scaramouche, Pantaloon, and Punch
nello play accompaniment on guitar, mandolin a
zither.

Breaking off, Punchinello begins to improvise
imitation of Harlequin's dance, but being beaten o
his hump with a thwacking stick by Harlequin, retre
with grotesque pantomime.

At their merriment, the younger beggar, rising, dra
away with the elder, making a tragic gesture toward t
white-bearded head on the wall.

Perceiving them, Capocomico silences the musicia
and approaches the younger beggar curiously.

Stepping between them, the older beggar salaa
and asks alms.

Laughing, Capocomico turns his empty pouch wro
side-out and bows obsequiously, extending his own pal

The other Maskers do likewise, sticking out th
tongues.

Shrinking from them, the younger beggar draws the er away with him, and goes off, left.

CAPOCOMICO

[*Waving them adieu*]

hammed, Confucius, Buddha, befriend you! —

[*Turning to his troupe*]

nold, my cronies, beggars — beggars

w down to us! Lo, they take us for lordlings!

, what did I tell you? Our tables are turning:

China henceforward we shall be emperors.

SCARAMOUCHE

the carcase of Charlemagne, I'm dog-aweary

twanging these gutstrings for breakfast.

PANTALOON

And us, too,

dancing from Venice to Pekin, for sixpence.—

slippers need soling.

PUNCHINELLO

My poor hump is hollow!

CAPO.

r journey is ended! Nimble Sir Harlequin,

[*Bowing to each*]

My lord Pantaloon, signore Punchinello,
Magnificent Scaramouche — enter your Kingdo

SCARAMOUCHE

Enter it! — Now, by the eye-balls of Argus
Where is this same kingdom, Signore Capocomicc
My kingdom is Breakfast: Show me the gatewa

CAPO.

[*Pointing*]

Behold it before you! Within there, the table
Of Fortune is spread for us, served by her ha
maids —
Miming Romance, seductive Adventure,
Amorous Magic — improvised Comedy,
And all the love-charming, blood-thirsting Encha
ments
Our prosy old workaday world has lost wind of.

SCARAMOUCHE

Ha, beard of Balshazzar! that warms me a belly
'Twas all for the likes of such merry contrapti
We were kicked out of Europe.

CAPO.

Precisely, my bully-boy!
at would you? — At home, half the world is dys-
eptic
h pills of reformers and critics and realists.
for its own sake? — Pho, it's old-fashioned!
with a mask on? — Unnaturalistic,
ey warn you, and scowl, and wag their sad peri-
igs. —
we — the unmatched, immortal, Olympian
skers of Antic, — we, troop of the tragical,
nbolical, comical, melodramatical
nmedia dell' Arte — we, once who by thousands
chanted to laughter the children of Europe —
old us now, packed out of town by the critics
wander the world, hobble-heel, tatter-elbowed,
egging our way — four vagabond-players,
d one master director — me, Capocomico!

PUNCHINELLO

why did you fetch us to China?

CAPO.

Because, my
nchinello, in China there are no technicians
measure our noses and label them false ones,

Or question our subplots and call them fictitious.
Here in China the world lies a-dream, like a Thous
Years Ago, and the place of our dreams is eter
Here in China Romance still goes masquing seren
With dragons, magicians, clowns, villains and her
So that five motley fellows like us may resume
Old tradetricks, and follow our noses to fortune! -
For a taste point your own, Punch, up there at
gate-stone!

PUNCHINELLO

[*Staring up at the heads*]

What pretty young princes! — But where are
rest of them?

SCARAMOUCHE

By Saladin! They've plenty of room for their bre
fast!

PANTALOON

It makes me light-headed to look at them.

CAPO.

Comra

Consider, I ask you, where else but in China
May an audience view so romantic a prologue?
These gentlemen open the comedy: Yonder
Behold, in the sunrise, they flaunt their grim Se
For us to unravel:—Who are they? What mean
That here, on a gateway of Pekin, these gory

acular heads stare downward in silence?
d yonder — those others? Who's he in the white
beard? —
ve, jealousy, murder — what is their mystery?
the ghost of old Gozzi, now what are we good for
less we untangle their shadowy intrigues! —
llow *me*, then, my playboys! Before the next
sunrise
ur pouches shall burst with the gold of their
Secret. —
llow me! — Yonder heads are our mascots to
ortune!

[*Striking their instruments and running through the gate, they all disappear within. As their tinklings die away, the two beggars reënter, from the left*]

THE YOUNGER BEGGAR

[*Prostrating himself again before the white bearded head, rises with up-lifted arms*]

ther! — O slaughtered King of Astrakhan,
nur, my father! —

THE OLDER BEGGAR

[*Furtively*]

Calaf! Have more care;
ere may be ears to listen.

CALAF

[*Distractedly*]

Let them hear! —
Oh, he has held me, Barak, on his knee,
And as a little boy I clutched that beard
With playful fingers: golden brown it was
In those days, and the first bright silver hair
When I had found and plucked it out —, his eyes
Oh, those poor staring eyes! — they laughed wi
light,
And with those mummied lips, — red, then, as wine
He kissed my cheek, and his warm, happy tears
Wet my own face, childish with wonder. — Ah,
My father!

BARAK

Hush! The soldiers of Altoum
Surround us here.

CALAF

Altoum! damned emperor
Of China — I will be avenged on him
Who killed my father, and destroyed our kingdo

BARAK

And what are you to be avenged on him? —
A beggar.

CALAF

I am prince of Astrakhan!

BARAK

o longer; he is dead. Remember, prince,
ow you were drowned a year ago. That night
ltoum destroyed your capitol in war,
ou leaped in flight into the river Yen
nd perished there. — Do not forget.

CALAF

Forget?
orget that night? That night I died indeed,
nd rose from out the river's chilly death
nto strange paradise: A garden, walled
Vith roses round: A moon, that zoned with pearl
spirit there: a lady, garbed in gold
nd her more golden smile! Wrapt in disguise —
beggar's cloak, which you had hid me in,
he river's ooze still staining me with slime —
n me — *me*, outcast and destroyed, she smiled,
nd tossed for alms the white rose from her hair! —
[*Taking from his bosom a withered rose, he looks on it rapturously*]
Iy deathless rose!

BARAK

The rose of Turandot
Is dangerous as her smile.

CALAF

Ah, were it not
That Turandot is daughter of Altoum,
I would have been avenged before to-day. —
But he who killed my father — is her father,
And she is more than life or death, and mightier
Even than a father dead and unavenged:
She is love.

BARAK

Ah, desperate boy, you nurse this love
On worse than poison. Calaf, hark to me.
Have I not served you and your royal father
Faithfully?

CALAF

More than faithfully: lovingly.

BARAK

Then by my love of you, I beg you, boy,
Crush your mad love for Turandot, which must
Lead only to your death, and hasten with me
Far from your enemy's city.

CALAF

My enemy's?

BARAK

ltoum, if he should find you living, would
pike your head — yonder. Ah, be wise, my prince!
oot out this rashness. Throw that rose away.
ee, it is withered — dead. So let your love be!

CALAF

[*Smiling*]

nly a lover rightly loves the rose!
Vithered, you tell me?—dead? How dull is the sense
Vhich does not feel the soul! For me, Barak,
his flower still blooms, and round it all the air
s sweet with spirit-perfume, even to swooning.

BARAK

[*Rising*]

hen it is vain. — My middle age has lost
ts smell for magic. Well, then, I must be
ontent to play the beggar with my prince.

CALAF

es, it is vain. For, still I'll wear her rose,
nd, in this beggar's cloak she smiled upon,
till haunt her perilous city. — I have heard
his morning she shall pass this eastern gate
oming from the palace. — So, my old dear friend,
Vait with me here, for I can only live
y feeding on the glimpses of her face.

BARAK

Come, then, this way and beg, for folk are comin

[*They draw toward the gate. Barak, sta*
ing fearfully, drags Calaf away le

Great heaven — the emperor!

CALAF

The emperor!

Wait, Barak. Stop! — No further.

[*On the edge of the scene, they crou*
by the wall, like beggars. Throu
the gate enter Altoum amid Chine
courtiers, accompanied by Capocomi
and followed by the other Masker

ALTOUM

[*To Capocomico*]

An instant is enou

For inspiration, and you have inspired
Fresh hopes in me.

CAPO.

That is my specialty,
Your majesty.

ALTOUM

Yet it is strangely sudden: —
You and your motley troop spring in my path

ike gorgeous mushrooms from exotic soils,
nd tempt me by your brilliance and surprise
o taste your newness. — Well, I am desperate:
ld remedies have lost their tonic; home
hysicians have proved quacks. I know them all
ou — I know not. Therefore I will accept
our services.

CAPO.

We are practitioners
n every specialty, my liege. If we
ail to perform our utmost promise — well,
[*Pointing to the gate*]
ur heads are decorative; they will adorn
our majesty's collection.

ALTOUM

Nay, not mine.
hose grizzled heads of warriors on the wall
re mine: the trophies of my victories.
ut those above the gate — those youthful brows
f tragic lovers, hapless in their love —
hose are my daughter's.

BARAK

[*To Calaf*]

Do you hear, my prince?
is daughter's! Oh, take heed!

CAPO.

Your majesty
Allures me. Is your daughter —

ALTOUM

Hush! Come close

[*He leads Capocomico away from the cu*
tain, right. Calaf follows furtivel
heedless of Barak's gestures]

My daughter is my cause of desperation.
In all but her I have been fortunate:
In peace, most prosperous; in war, my worst
Of rivals, Timur, king of Astrakhan —
[*Pointing at the wall*]
Yonder you see his head! None of his house
Survives to avenge him, for his only son
Perished by drowning.

CALAF

[*To Barak, who implores him to dra*
back]
God! if I remain,
I'll kill him.

BARAK

[*Drawing him away*]
Come!
[*They go within the gate*]

CAPO.

Was this long since, my liege?

ALTOUM

'his day one year ago. — Some months I kept
'ld Timur caged before I bleached him there. —
nd strangely it was on that very night
conquered Astrakhan the change began.

CAPO.

'he change — my liege! — what change?

ALTOUM

In Turandot,
Iy daughter. Always till that time her mind
Vas tender-mannered as her face is fair.
ill then, there was no creature living whom
he would have harmed, even with a thought of
pain —
east of all those who loved her. But that night,
roping by moonlight from her rose garden
nto my war tent, half distractedly
he forced from me a promise —

CAPO.

What to do?

ALTOUM

o make this edict: For a year and a day,
ll royal suitors of her hand in marriage

Must answer first three riddles put by her:
To him who answers right she shall be wed;
But all who answer wrong shall straightway die
And their dissevered heads be spiked in scorn
High on the city's gate.

CAPO.

[*Looking at the gate*]

So those are they
Who answered wrong!

ALTOUM

None yet has answered right

CAPO.

But why, my liege —

ALTOUM

Why did I give consent
To publish the mad edict? This is why:
I worship Turandot. There is no whim
Of hers I would not grant to make her happy, —
But ah! — how can I make her so?

CAPO.

Is she
Unhappy, then, in her success?

ALTOUM

At times
She weeps to hear the headsman's gong, but when

ler lovers cry to her for pity, straight
ler eyes grow cold with sudden cruelty
nd give the sign for death.

CAPO.

Have you no clue
or this?

ALTOUM

[*Distractedly*]

No clue? Gods of my ancestors,
ave I not sought a thousand counsels, all
ı vain! — A gentle girl, a dove of maidens,
ıdden transformed to be a thing of talons —
harpy-tigress! Clue? What clue have I
or murder in the bosom of a dove? —

CAPO.

ftly, my liege. That is my specialty.

ALTOUM

I have heard from specialists before;
et now I feel new hope. If you shall find
ıis clue — whether it be some hidden, strange
ıdisposition, or some secret reason
ıncealed by her— and *if you find the cure*, —
o you, and to these motley friends of yours,

I will bequeath power and provinces
And wealth unbounded. But — pay heed, Sir Capo
If you shall *fail* to find this cause and cure,
By holy Confucius, I will *doom* you all
To tortures and slow death. So to perform
Your task, I grant one day — until the hour
Of noon to-morrow. Are you satisfied
To undertake the task? If not, begone!

CAPO.

Your majesty, I am most itching pleased
To undertake it — on conditions.

ALTOUM

What?

CAPO.

For this one day *I* must be emperor,
In place of you, and these my motley friends —
Prime-ministers.

ALTOUM

My star! — What then, Sir?

CAPO.

Ther

My liege, I most devoutly stake my head
And theirs, with these our masks thereto pertainin
Not merely to ascertain the cause and cure
Of your fair daughter's malady, but also —

r this, my liege, is my *true* specialty! —
undertake to see her happily
ight in a perfect marriage of romance.

ALTOUM

eat Buddha! Now, this quickens my stale blood —
meet one man of live audacity!
a! bid me abdicate — usurp my throne —
one day's emperor! — Good; be it so.
greed: — But on your head the consequences!

CAPO.

ay the consequences let my head be on! —
here shall I find your daughter?

[*A deep bell sounds within the walls. Calaf reënters with Barak*]

ALTOUM

Hark! the gong!

CAPO.

hat gong?

ALTOUM

The gong of death: the execution.
nother hapless lover has guessed wrong
ie fateful riddles. Now the headsman holds
s head, and Turandot is coming here
state, to impale the gory token — yonder.

BARAK

[*To Calaf*]

You hear! — You hear?

CALAF

O happy lover, whom
The dearest of women honors so in death!

BARAK

Madness!

ALTOUM

[*To Capocomico*]

By heaven, I am impatient of
Such slaughter. See you stop it.

CAPO.

[*Nodding loftily*]

We shall be
In mind your supplication, Sir. — Meanwhile
My crown!

[*He extends his hand for Altoum's crown. Altoum, startled, smil takes it off and hands it to him*]

ALTOUM

Gods of my ancestors!

CAPO.

[*Putting on the crown*]

And now
Present to us our court!

ALTOUM

[*Bows, laughing*]
Well said, my liege!
[*Turning to the Chinese courtiers, he beckons them*]

octors and ministers of the royal Divan!
itness our will: — Until to-morrow noon
e abdicate our throne, and in our place
ppoint, with all our high prerogatives,
ır friend and servant — Capocomico.
lute your emperor!

CAPO.

[*Nodding affably*]
Emperor, *pro tem!*

THE CHINESE COURTIERS

[*With murmurs of astonishment, prostrate themselves before Capocomico*]

laam!

CAPO.

Not at all. Delighted! We will now
esent our friend and servant — Scaramouche,
ime-Minister!

[*The courtiers salaam before Scar*
mouche, who puts his hand on h
heart and blows them a kiss from h
drawn sword-point]

And next, Sir Harlequin,

Prime-Minister!

[*The courtiers repeat. Harlequin r*
plies with a ballet-curtsy]

His lordship, Pantaloon,

Prime-Minister!

[*The courtiers repeat. Pantaloon shu*
fles nervously]

And Signore Punchinello,

Prime-Minister!

[*The courtiers repeat. Punchinello, ta*
ping his nose, bows sagely. T
four Maskers assume toploftical ai
and gather about Capocomico]

And now, Prime-Minister, are your four hea
All dumb? Your emperor awaits advice.

SCARAMOUCHE

By the belly of Baal, your majesty, I move
We all adjourn to breakfast.

PANTALOON

[*Quickly*]

Second the motion!

PUNCHINELLO

ear! hear! Applause!

[*Harlequin dances to the gate*]

CAPO.

[*Correctively*]

No applause in court! The motion
ests on the table —

[*To Scaramouche*]

with your breakfast. — Now
lore pressing matters urge: Our imperial
aughter — Princess of Pekin — comes.

ALTOUM

[*Gasping*]

Your daughter!

CAPO.

aughter, *pro tem!* —

[*To all*]

The princess Turandot:
alute her!

[*To the intermittent toll of the deep gong,*
soldiers enter with procession to slow,

martial music. Amongst them, wi
regalia, a Headsman bears on a pi
the head of a young man, which
places beside the others over the ga
Finally, accompanied by female slave
comes Turandot, dressed like her fo
lowers in garb of gloomy splendor.
In the crowd Calaf gazes at her pa
sionately. With him is Barak.
The Chinese courtiers prostrate the
selves.
The Maskers bow in European fashion

THE CHINESE COURTIERS AND CROWD

Turandot! Salaam!

CAPO.

[*Speaks familiarly to the emperor*]

Altoum,
Present to us our newly adopted daughter!

ALTOUM

Turandot, heaven to-day has interposed
To grant your prayers. Listen!

TURANDOT

[*Looking with wonder at Capocomi*
and the Maskers]

I am listening, Si

ALTOUM

Tis your strange prayer never to marry. Well,
Henceforth I vow no more to oppose your whim.
One year has passed and one day yet remains
Of my rash law that dooms your lovers to death.

[*He points to the new head upon the wall*]

For that one day, to celebrate my vow
And do you pleasure, I have appointed these
Princes of Faraway, to usher in
Our new régime. Sir Capocomico
Is now your emperor; these are your court
To make a festa of the law's last day. —
After to-morrow you are free forever.

TURANDOT

Sire, are you jesting?

CAPO.

Signorina, all
We dream or do is jesting, and ourselves
The butts of the jester. We are antics all.
To advertise it is my specialty.
Therefore, if we be kings or deuces hangs
On how the clever jester cuts his pack.
This cut I'm king, and

[*Pointing to the Maskers*]

red is trumps, not blac

So doff your mourning, daughter.

TURANDOT

If I am dreamin

Or you are jesting, this is the pleasantest jest
My heart has dreamed in all one doleful year.
Princes of Faraway, I welcome you.
This bloody sport of spikèd lovers' heads —
I'm tired of playing it. Those heartless fools
That sought to wed a princess 'gainst her will —
Look how they read my riddle on the air!
Love is a slippery necklace. — Bring me laughter,
My one day's Sire, and I will bow me low
And kiss your garment.

CAPO.

Go and change your own, the

To match our motley.

TURANDOT

I will go — and laugh

In going.

[*To her slaves*]

Come!

[*Turandot starts to return within t*
gate. Pushing through the crowd, Cal

prostrates himself before her, with a passionate cry]

CALAF

Alms! — alms for hearts

That beg!

[*Reaching toward her, Calaf holds up the withered rose.*

Gazing, Turandot pauses an instant, moves past, but, looking back, staggers, trembling]

TURANDOT

Ah me!

[*Swaying, she swoons in the arms of her slave, Zelima*]

ZELIMA

My lady!

CAPO.

[*Rushing toward her, with Altoum*]

Quick! She's falling!

ALTOUM

Turandot! — Kill the beggar.

TURANDOT

[*Faintly, recovering*]

No, 'tis nothing.

[*To Capocomico*]

Here, give him this.

CAPO.

[*Taking it, astounded*]

Your ring?

TURANDOT

A token, Sire. —

A token of our new régime: to all
My people — blessing, and to beggars — love.

[*She goes out*]

ALTOUM

[*Going with her*]

Attend her well, Zelima.

[*All follow after, and at a gesture from Capocomico, pass out. Near the gate the Maskers pause and wait for Capocomico, who returns to Calaf*]

CAPO.

Fellow, rise!

[*Calaf staggers to his feet*]

Your most high princess graciously bestows
This alms — a ring, in token of her love
To all the world.

[*Taking it, Calaf falls again to the ground. Barak comes to him. Capocomico watches, and beckons, twinkling, to the Maskers*]

Now heaven witness this: —
He also swoons. My play-boys, catch your cue.
Who said Romance is buried? Here is China
Where princesses and beggars swoon to meet! —

[*Surreptitiously, he takes from Calaf's side a wallet. Then beckons the Maskers.*]

Prime-Minister, follow your emperor!

[*He departs with the Maskers*]

BARAK

[*With solicitude*]

Calaf — my prince!

[*He raises him to a sitting posture*]

CALAF

[*Dazedly*]

Her ring!

BARAK

We must be gone —
Danger surrounds us here.

CALAF

[*Rising*]

Her ring for token!
But ah! — he said "to all the world."

BARAK

Be quick!

CALAF

[*With suddenness*]

I will. This instant I will follow her.

BARAK

Follow her! — what, to death?

CALAF

Death or delight,
Either or both, for death itself were joy
For her sake.

BARAK

Do you wear that ring in hope?
A beggar?

CALAF

No, she gave it as an alms,
"To all the world." The princess of the world
Would never stoop in love to wed with less
Than royal blood. — There is no hope for me,
A beggar.

BARAK

How, then —?

CALAF

I will go as prince —
As Calaf, prince of Astrakhan, I'll go
To guess her riddles — like those others.

BARAK

No!
That would be doubly death. Your head is forfeit
If you are even found.

CALAF

Few know me here, or none,
In Pekin; yet though every dog should know me
I'll do it. — Here, keep safe this beggar's cloak:
I love it for her sake. This ring and rose
Guard as your life. Come now; help me remove
This stain and straggled beard. Then wait for me,
Till I have won my love — or perish there!

[*Pointing to the heads on the gate, he rushes into the city.*]

BARAK

[*Following him*]
Lord of mad lovers, save him!

Curtain.

ACT SECOND

ACT SECOND

Scene I: *A Room in the Harem*

On a low bench Zelima is seated, sewing a gorgeously nbroidered garment. About her are other female slaves. At the back stands Chang, the chief Eunuch.

ZELIMA

[*Stops sewing and listens*]

here! Hark! I hear it again.

CHANG

I can hear nothing.

ZELIMA

ou're growing deaf, Chang. Some one is knock-ing — softly.

CHANG

[*Opening the door, left*]

o one is here.

ZELIMA

Below — at the outer door.

e who it is.

CHANG

I will see.

[*He goes out, closing the door. Zelim*
sews for a moment; then rises, pu
away her needle and spreads out th
garment, surveying it.
From the right Turandot enters, splen
didly arrayed.
She runs impetuously to Zelima an
embraces her]

TURANDOT

Zelima! Zelima!

Little Zelima!

ZELIMA

[*Affectionately*]

My lady!

TURANDOT

Dance with me! — Dance!

ZELIMA

I heard a knocking, my lady.

TURANDOT

[*Pressing her left side*]

You heard it — her

My lover is knocking, and I have let him in.

ZELIMA

[*Frightened*]

'ou've let him in, my lady?

TURANDOT

[*Laughing*]

Into my heart!

Ie came a-begging. Oh, does he love me, Zelima?

ZELIMA

[*Concernedly*]

Ie kept your rose.

TURANDOT

The rose I tossed from my garden

n Astrakhan, one year ago to-night —

sn't he handsome, Zelima?

ZELIMA

[*With conscientious pause*]

Handsome, my lady?

TURANDOT

plendid and fair like a prince!

ZELIMA

He is a beggar.

TURANDOT

spoke of his soul — his eyes. His eyes are sapphires;

ll other men's are clay.

ZELIMA

[*Dubiously*]

His face was dirty.

TURANDOT

[*Slapping Zelima's arm*]

Stop it, you dunce! His face was nobly tanned
By sun and rugged wind.

ZELIMA

I thought his beard —

TURANDOT

His beard — God did his best: I want no better.

ZELIMA

You — want a beard, my lady?

TURANDOT

Stupid Zelima!
Where's my new robe? I'll wear it to-day — fo
him.

ZELIMA

[*Helping her on with the embroidere*
garment]

You like it?

TURANDOT

Are not gold and gorgeousness
For joy? To-morrow ends my year and a day.

Then no more suitors — no more severed heads!
I shall be free then — free to search for him
Through all the city.

ZELIMA

Search for a beggar! Why,
My lady?

TURANDOT

Must I scratch your silly eyes out
To make them see? — Of all men that love women,
I will have none for husband — if he'll have me —
But *him*, the man to whom I gave my ring.

ZELIMA

Holy Confucius save you, lady! You,
Princess of Pekin, wed a beggar!

TURANDOT

Hush!
Unless I dream so and rejoice to-day
Then I must wake and tear my flesh for grief
That I was born Princess of Pekin. Oh,
Little Zelima, let me dream I am
A beggar-maid, or he, my beggar — a prince!

ZELIMA

I hope your royal father hears no word
Of this, my lady. He would kill your lover
Sooner than you should wed him.

TURANDOT

I know it well.
So I have kept my secret this long year,
And let full many a brave prince lose his head
To hide my true love. Do not make me weep
Again for pity and despair. For now
Fresh hope has come. This Capocomico
Has changed my father's heart to set me free
To-morrow. Only one more day is left;
You only know my secret; none can guess it;
And for this final day there is no suitor
To claim my hand.

[*Chang enters, left, in perturbation. Turandot looks up inquiringly*]

Well — well?

CHANG

Another suitor
Has come, my lady.

TURANDOT

Nay, alas!

ZELIMA

What, — here?
Is he at the door?

CHANG

Not him, — the emperor
Is at the door. He comes to tell you, lady,
And asks admittance.

TURANDOT

What, my father!

CHANG

[*Fidgetting*]

Not
Your royal father: The new emperor
Is here.

TURANDOT

Sir Capo here!

ZELIMA

[*Appalled*]

Here, in the harem!

CHANG

What should I do, your highness?

TURANDOT

[*Staring*]

What can it mean?

CAPO.

[*Entering, left*]

The new régime, fair ladies!

[*To Zelima, who runs with the other slave girls toward the door, right*]

I beseech you,
Do not be timid: All true love romances
Are hatched in harems. 'Tis my specialty.

[*Dressed in robes of royal splendo*
Capocomico stands smiling at them

TURANDOT

Sir, this intrusion breaks our ancient law.

CAPO.

To-day — O lovely daughter! — *I* am the law
And legalize intrusion.

[*To Chang*]

You may go.

[*Chang pauses, dubious, but at a gestur*
from Capo, departs hastily. Zelim
goes timorously to Turandot, whos
eyes flash]

TURANDOT

Will you make entrance here against our wills,
Or why, then, have you come?

CAPO.

[*Smiling*]

For a beggar's sak

TURANDOT

[*With sudden start*]

A beggar's?

CAPO.

What I bring will fill four ears —

No more.

TURANDOT

[*Faintly*]

Zelima, wait within — close by.

[*Zelima goes out, right with the slave girls*]

Well, Sire, what do you bring me?

CAPO.

Riches, child,

In a ragged wallet.

[*He takes out Calaf's wallet, and holds it toward her.*]

TURANDOT

[*Starting*]

This! Why bring me this?

CAPO.

Hold it, and feel how heavy.

TURANDOT

[*Slowly takes it, peering in*]

Why, 'tis empty.

CAPO.

What is so heavy as an empty heart
Hollow with yearning! This has yearned for love
Until it cracked. Look there — those sorry gashes

TURANDOT

What should I do with it?

CAPO.

Heal its wounds, and fill it
With royal favor.

TURANDOT

[*Reticent*]

Sire, you talk in riddles.

CAPO.

Daughter, you kill in riddles. — Will you kill,
Or heal, this beggar's heart I bring?

TURANDOT

Ah me!

[*No longer suppressing her feelings, she kisses the wallet passionately.*]

How have you guessed my soul? How have you guessed?

CAPO.

The souls of lovers are my specialty. —
When princesses grow pale, and beggars swoon,
Then I bring forth my wallet — and prescribe.

TURANDOT

Alas — he swooned? Where is he? Is he ill?

CAPO.

Unnecessary questions, child: Of course
He swooned. Where is he? He's in love,
Of course, and so of course is deathly ill.

TURANDOT

Oh, by the simple truth you've torn from me,
Do not, I beg, speak sideling, but straight out:
That beggar whom I love — how fares he now?
Where have you left him?

CAPO.

By the city gate.
There, when he saw your ring, he fell in swoon;
And so I left him.

TURANDOT

[*Passionately*]

Find him! Find him for me,
And I will give you kingdoms!

CAPO.

Kingdoms, child,
Are shaky things. Give me your confidence:
Then I will find him for you.

TURANDOT

All my faith,
My gratitude and wonder — they are yours! —
When will you fetch him?

CAPO.

Soft! To achieve for you
Joy in a perfect marriage of romance —
That is *my* vow. 'Tis yours, for a single day,
To swear me loyalty.

TURANDOT

I swear it. — Ah,
But do not tell my father. He would kill
My hopes.

CAPO.

Your father — I will educate;
And for your low-born lover, I'll despatch
The eight proud legs of my prime-minister
To stalk the city till they stumble on him.
By nightfall, I will give you news what luck
They meet. Meantime, you must prepare once more
Your riddles for your final suitor.

TURANDOT

[*Appalled*]

What!

CAPO.

Keedur, the young khan of Beloochistan,
Waits in the hall below, to try his fate
To-day.

TURANDOT

Keedur? Another! Must another
till die on this last day? Oh, misery!
nd I to run the awful risk once more! —
Vhen must this be?

CAPO.

This hour, in the great hall
f the imperial Divan. Rest you merry,
Iy child, and whet your riddles sharp. — Good-bye!

TURANDOT

[*Detaining him by a swift gesture*]
Not yet! Stay yet a little: Help me!

CAPO.

How?

TURANDOT

'o shape my riddles so no man that lives
'an answer them.

CAPO.

[*Bows, smiling*]
Why, that's my specialty.

TURANDOT

[*Slowly, with desperation.*]
'apo, those riddles hold his life or mine:
f Keedur guesses them — I'll kill myself.

Curtain

SCENE II: *Great Hall of the Emperor's Divan.*

On either side is a high tower, with entrance.

Down scene on the left stands the Emperor's throne opposite the throne of Turandot.

As the curtain rises, Scaramouche, Punchinello Pantaloon, and Harlequin enter, dragging in Barak by four purple ropes attached to his neck.

Barak carries a ragged bundle.

At the centre he falls, prostrating himself before them

The four Maskers are dressed sumptuously in Chinese garments, worn over their own tattered garb of motley, which — at times, when they gesticulate o move abruptly, — are fantastically visible.

BARAK

Mercy and clemency, your highnesses!

PUNCHINELLO

Your *highness*, slave! Address thy vermin speech To the Prime-Minister.

BARAK

To which, O Lord?

SCARAMOUCHE

By the eye of Og and head of Hamongog,
To *us*, thou quaking mongrel! Howl thy prayers
Quadrately to thy quadrigeminal master!

BARAK

[*Revolving himself fearfully*]
Mercy, O Master!

PANTALOON

First confess thyself!
Where is he?

PUNCHINELLO

Where's thy fellow beggar? Speak!

SCARAMOUCHE

Tooth of the Turk! — Disgorge him!
[*Harlequin thwacks Barak on the head with his flat-stick*]

BARAK

Lord, I know not.
I am an old poor man. I have no fellow
To beg with me.

PANTALOON

Thou lousy bag of lies!
He swooned beside thee at the city gate.

PUNCHINELLO

He took the Princess' ring for alms. Where is he

SCARAMOUCHE

[*Tightening his rope*]

By Sardanapalus! Squeeze off his neck
And pick the secret from his gullet.

BARAK

[*As Harlequin bangs him again*]

Spare me!

[*Enter, left, Capocomico*]

CAPO.

Hah! here's our beggar's crony.—Where's thy mate
Old gaffer?

BARAK

Spare me, lord! I have no mate —
I beg alone.

CAPO.

Where was he found — this fellow?

SCARAMOUCHE

Godbodikins! We caught him gutter-skulking
Behind the palace.

CAPO.

What's here in this pack?

BARAK

[*Fearfully clutching his bundle*]

Old rags, your mightiness: poor worthless pickings.

CAPO.

Conduct him to my quarters. Search him there
And look what this contains.

[*The four begin to drag him out with the ropes*]

BARAK

A — yi! Alas!

PUNCHINELLO

[*Mocking him*]

A — yi, old pickings!

SCARAMOUCHE

[*Pulling*]

Sacrasacristan!
Heave-ho, my hearts!

CAPO.

Hold him in custody
Till I can question further.

BARAK

[*Crying aloud*]

Calaf, save me!

PANTALOON

We'll save 'ee in salt, old calf!

SCARAMOUCHE

Yank-ho, there!

[*They drag him out, left*]

CAPO.

[*Stands meditating*]

Calaf

[*Hardly have they disappeared, whe*
Calaf enters hastily, right, lookin
about him with a startled expressio
He is dressed in princely regalia, an
his face is shaved. Seeing Capo. h
pauses abruptly, and makes obeisanc

CAPO.

Greetings, Sir Keedur! — You are *searching* here?

CALAF

[*Embarrasssed*]

Nothing, your majesty. It seemed I heard
A voice here cry in terror.

CAPO.

Cry — on *whom?*

CALAF

Nay, Sire, I do not know.

CAPO.

'Twas just a beggar
That cried at being expelled.

CALAF

Expelled? — Where to?

CAPO.

[*With a flitting smile*]

You — care to know?

CALAF

Nay, Sire, why should I care?

CAPO.

Nay, why indeed? You caught me querying.

CALAF

[*Turning to leave*]

Forgive that I disturbed your thoughts.

CAPO.

My thoughts

Were trying to construe the beggar's cry.

"Calaf, save me!" he called.

CALAF

[*Pausing, with a faint start*]

Ah — Calaf? So!

CAPO.

An odd coincidence, for 'tis one year

To-night since Calaf, prince of Astrakhan,

Perished by drowning in the river Yen. —

[*With slow emphasis*]

He was the Emperor's arch-enemy.

CALAF

[*Calmly*]

An odd coincidence!

CAPO.

And still more odd

It might be — might it not? — if Keedur, Khan
Of far Beloochistan, had chanced to know
Or meet this Calaf.

CALAF

Still more odd.

CAPO.

Perchance

He never did!

CALAF

[*Fidgetting slightly*]

I never met him, Sire.

CAPO.

[*With a quick glance*]

That being so, we must no more delay
Your audience with the princess. My ear itches.
Methinks by that your suit will prosper; let me
Conduct you to your place of waiting. Come,
And by the way, I will confide to you —
I have a specialty.

CALAF

In what, Sire?

CAPO.

[*Smiling, as they go out*]

Riddles.

[*Enter Altoum and Chang. They look after Capo as he departs*]

ALTOUM

In the harem, with my daughter —?

CHANG

[*Obsequiously*]

Even so,
O Majesty.

ALTOUM

And closeted, you say,
An hour with her!

CHANG

An hour, O Majesty.

ALTOUM

But you kept watch: The Princess, she was not
Alarmed?

CHANG

Her royal highness seemed
Moved in her spirit, O Majesty.

ALTOUM

Moved? So!
Well, Chang, inform me further what you note.
To-day this stranger reigns as Emperor.
Obey him.

[*Capo reënters, right*]

CHANG

[*Salaaming to a gesture of dismissal from Altoum*]
As your Majesty decrees.

[*Exit*]

ALTOUM.

[*Greets Capo cordially*]
Hail, friend! You wear my Empire as you'd worn it
Life long.

CAPO.

[*Laughing*]
I'll wear it longer if you like.

ALTOUM

Perchance I'll let you. As for me, I feel
Lighthearted as a schoolboy playing truant.
This abdicating gives me appetite
For holidays. — And what success so far?

CAPO.

So far — perfection.

ALTOUM

Have you, then, discovered
My daughter's malady?

CAPO.

I've diagnosed
Already, and prescribed.

ALTOUM

[*Eagerly*]

What is the ailment?

CAPO.

Ah! question the doctor when he makes the cure. —
Another twenty hours!

ALTOUM

To rule is sweet,
I see. Good luck attend your reign! If so,
I have four kingdoms waiting for your fellows,
And for yourself a petty empire — *but*,
Forget not — Sire! For failure I've prepared
Five torture chambers and a sharpened axe.

CAPO.

Tomorrow, then, four kingdoms shall have kings!
As for the petty empire, I'll return it

With compliments, and count myself well quit
To have served your Majesty and true Romance.

[*Kettledrums are sounded within*]

Now, then, to pass the first ordeal. — Pray follow!

ALTOUM

[*Attending him, left*]

This suitor Keedur — I like well his looks
And bearing. What if he should guess the riddles?

CAPO.

That lies now with the Fates — and they obey me.

[*They go out.*

To the sound of kettledrums, tambourines and music outside, the scene is now for a moment empty. Then from both entrances two processions enter simultaneously.

From the right enter Eunuchs and female slaves of the harem; from the left Chinese soldiers and courtiers of the Emperor's suite.

With ceremonial, salaaming and flare of music, the persons in the processions group themselves on either side about the thrones.

Entering last in their separate processions come Turandot and Capocomico — the latter accompanied by Altoum, as a subordinate.

On the right throne Turandot sits, on the left — Capocomico.

All the others prostrate themselves, except Altoum, who stands beside a lesser seat, at the right of Capo's throne.

Having taken their positions, at a signal from Capo, all are served with tea in little cups, which they sip simultaneously thrice, then resume their former obeisances.

To this gathering now enter three of the Maskers — Scaramouche, Punchinello and Pantaloon — bearing severally three golden platters, on which stand little jeweled boxes, closed.

Behind them follows Harlequin, who bears a great parchment roll, which — with bows and ballet-dancings — he lays before the throne of Capo; then takes his stand at Capo's left.

Lastly Calaf enters, alone.

Bowing to the throne, he remains in the centre, where he gazes rapt at Turandot.

Capo now rises, and Altoum seats himself]

CAPO.

Powers of our royal Divan and our Harem,
Once more, in token of our sovereign will,
We are assembled. Let the law be read!

[*He sits. Harlequin, stepping forward with a flourish, presents the roll of parchment to Punchinello, who, exchanging with him his platter for the script, reads in a shrill voice*]

PUNCHINELLO

To high Confucius and our ancestors —
Worship and awe! The edict of Altoum
In re the royal princess Turandot
Perpends: To suitors of her august hand
Who guess her riddles — marriage, riches, joy!
To all who fail — shame, execution, death!
None save of royal blood shall qualify.

[*Harlequin receives back the roll from Punchinello, and resumes his place*

CAPO.

Who seeks the august hand of Turandot?

CALAF

[*Standing forward*]

I, Keedur, Khan of great Beloochistan.

CAPO.

Keedur, full many noble youths before you
Have made this trial; all have failed — and died.
Have you considered well their doom, O Khan?

CALAF

There is no doom for me but loss of her;
If then I fail, death can but ease my doom.

TURANDOT

[*In a low voice*]

His eyes, Zelima! Oh, I would he'd look
Another way.

ZELIMA

It is a lovely youth.

CAPO.

Think well, you are young. You may even still
withdraw
And live these many years.

CALAF

[*His eyes meeting Turandot's, who look at him anxiously*]

If I must die,
I shall have lived forever in this instant.

CAPO.

Then let the trial proceed.

TURANDOT

Fair stranger, first
Hear me, and so relent.

CALAF.

My spirit, lady,
Stands tiptoe to your words.

TURANDOT

You have not well
Considered what you seek; but I, who know,
Can better advise you. Turandot you seek,
But I, who know this Turandot, can tell you
She is a lady of too little worth
To cause the noble lineage in your blood
To die. She neither wants you, nor your death.
Now leave her, Sir, and give her leave to wish you
Joy of your twice escape.

CALAF

I hear you, yet
hear like one who dies out on the desert
nd dreams he hears sweet water tinkling. — Lady,
parch and drink dream-water. Would you dash
hat boon from my soul's lips?

TURANDOT

Nay, then, no more!
lear now my riddles. — But, I pray you, look not
his way, but elsewhere.

CALAF

I will close my eyes
nd look upon you, listening. — I am ready.

[*Closing his eyes, he waits with a faint smile*]

TURANDOT

Tell me, O friend: What is that flower
Which, dying, steals its lover's breath,
And being dead, still blooms in death,
Living beyond its little hour
To grow more sweet in fragrance as it grows
In memory?

[*Turandot gazes pityingly. Calaf speaks with closed eyes*]

CALAF

A withered rose.

[*Turandot starts suddenly from h*
throne and sinks back, whisperi
to Zelima. Capo despatches Har
quin to Turandot, who gives h
tremblingly a key, which he carr
to Scaramouche]

CAPO.

Unlock the secret box.

SCARAMOUCHE

[*As Harlequin unlocks the little box*
his platter and presents to him a str
of parchment from within it, rea
aloud]

A withered rose.

[*A murmur runs through the assemb*

ALTOUM

Now by my star, well guessed!

CAPO.

[*With a gesture for silence*]

The second ridd

TURANDOT

[*With emotion*]

Stranger, you are the first of all my suitors

That ever reached the second. — I have spoken
To you in pity, but my pity now
Is for myself, lest you should guess too well.
Cease, then, I beg you. Rest content with passing
Your rivals. Go! And I will give you triumph
In your departure.

ALTOUM

Shame! Fair play, my daughter!

CAPO.

Silence, my lord Altoum! — What says the Khan?

CALAF

I answer here by law, risking my death.
Therefore, O lady, since my love of you
Surpasses life, I claim my right of law.

TURANDOT

[*Her eyes flashing*]

By heaven, cold prince, I see I wasted pity
Upon a heart of ice. Meet, then, your fate!
I will not weep to watch the headsman's axe.

CALAF

I trust you will not, princess. — I am ready.

TURANDOT

[*To Zelima*]

O fiend! My fingers itch to scratch him.

[*To Calaf*]

Hear, then

Reveal, O youth: What is that fetter
Which, chaining, sets its captive free,
But broken, makes of liberty
A weary bondage, little better
Than death, to one whose spirits mount and sing
In manacles?

[*Calaf remains silent, pressing his closed eyes in thought. Altoum leans forward. The people mutter low. Turandot gazes disdainfully. Soon letting his raised hands fall, Calaf speaks with tense calmness.*]

CALAF

A lover's ring.

TURANDOT

[*Cries out*]

What's that?

[*Clutching Zelima's arm*]

My God! here is some treachery.

CAPO.

Open the second lock!

[*Harlequin unlocks the little box held by Punchinello, who reads aloud*]

PUNCHINELLO

A lover's ring.

[*A great murmur goes up from the assembly*]

ALTOUM

Wondrous! The fates are with him.

TURANDOT

[*Rising, fiercely*]

Not the fates —

The fiends are with him. I cry out upon
This answer. Some perfidious hand
Has tampered with those locks.

CAPO.

Respect this hall
And presence, Princess: *We* shall judge alone.

TURANDOT

False friend, is this your pay for all my trust,
And this the perfect joy you bid me hope for?
[*To Altoum*]
Father, I cry on you to right this wrong!

ALTOUM

The wrong is yours to flout your own decree.
But right or wrong, my power is hushed: Not here
But yonder sits the Emperor of China.

TURANDOT

Why, this is monstrous. I am sold a slave
By an abdicated father and a motley
Who apes the emperor in a player's mask! —
I'll put no further riddle.

CAPO.

[*Smiling*]

As you like,
Princess, but let us keep our humors. If
There be no final riddle, Keedur wins:
The priests are ready to perform your wedding.

TURANDOT

[*Trembling with rage*]

My wedding! — Ah, then, I am duped indeed,
And must submit to treachery. But you —
O subtle Khan, dream not to shame me so,
And win. I will not *live* to be your wife. —
Do you still claim your riddle?

CALAF

[*Who has stood in utter calmness*]

I am ready.

TURANDOT

[*In fury*]

Then may your answer spike your head in death!

[*Clutching her throne, she speaks with voice quivering*]

Reply, O Prince: What may that be
Which, light of heart, causes despite,
But heavy-laden, renders light
Its bearer, making care so free
That kings might give their crowns to call it
Their treasure house?

[*A deep hush falls on the assembly. Calaf stands, silent, swaying.*

Slowly he totters and falls on the steps of Capo's Throne.

There, as Harlequin raises him, Capo whispers swiftly at his ear. Suddenly then, fixing his eyes on Turandot, who stands pale and rigid, Calaf speaks thrillingly.]

CALAF

A beggar's wallet.

TURANDOT

[*With a low cry, holding her side*]

Ah!

CAPO.

[*To Harlequin*]

Quickly! — The third key!

[*Swiftly Harlequin unlocks the box held by Pantaloon, who reads aloud*]

A beggar's wallet.

TURANDOT

[*Turning, desperately*]

Zelima!

ZELIMA

[*Screaming*]

Lady!

[*Snatching from Zelima a little dagger she lifts it and strikes at her own breast. Leaping to the throne, Calaf intercepts her and turns the dagger against himself*]

CALAF

Not you, my love!

CAPO.

Disarm them!

ALTOUM

Turandot!

[*Amid uproar, the four Maskers rush upon Calaf and wrest from him the dagger*]

TURANDOT

[*With fierce disdain*]
Coward hearts!

CALAF

[*Uplifting his hands to Capo*]
Sire, hear my plea!

CAPO.

Order and silence! — Speak, Sir Keedur.

CALAF

Sire,
If I have won this ordeal by the law —
Declare it.

CAPO.

You have won.

CALAF

Then I renounce
All I have won, and place before this court
A counter plea. Shall it be granted?

CAPO.

What
Do you petition?

CALAF

Sire, since it would shame me
And her, to take this noble princess' hand

Without her heart, I quit my claim, but ask
In substitute, a boon :— I, whom you call
Sir Keedur, Khan, am royal and a prince,
But I am not Khan of Beloochistan.
Keedur is not my name.

TURANDOT

So, treachery
Once more!

ALTOUM

Peace, daughter!

CAPO.

[*To Calaf*]
Speak. What is your plea?

CALAF

This, Sire: Since I have answered now three riddles
Of Turandot, that she — to make fair play —
Shall answer one of mine. If she shall guess it,
I then depart, but if she fail, I stay —
And wed her.

TURANDOT

[*Scornfully to Capo*]
Ha! This jesting, Sire, fits well
Your new régime.

CAPO.

[*To Calaf*]

What is your riddle?

CALAF

This:

Reveal, O Lady: What is he,
His true-born name,
His father's fame,
Who, desperate for love of thee,
Assumed from far Beloochistan
The false name — Keedur, Khan?

TURANDOT

Nay sir, I'd scorn to answer. What you are,
Or who, or whence — to me henceforth 'tis nothing.

CAPO.

Softly, quick tongue! To us the game seems fair.
Sir nameless lover, you shall have your plea.
'Tis granted.

TURANDOT

[*Trembling with rage*]

What! — O miracle of shame!
Perfidious Masker!

CAPO.

This your riddle shall
Be answered here to-morrow by this lady,

Or else you shall be wedded to her here
Before high noon.

TURANDOT

[*Descending swiftly from the throne*]

Fools! I defy you — both!

[*Flinging her sceptre at Capo's feet, she rushes out*]

CAPO.

[*Rising*]

Follow her!

[*At his gesture, the four Maskers follow after. Amid loud murmur and commotion Calaf stands staring at the empty throne*]

Curtain

ACT THIRD

ACT THIRD

*SCENE I: *An anteroom in the harem. Night.*

In the centre of the columned room is a table, on which — softly illumined — stands a large crystal bowl, filled with swimming gold fishes.

Nearby, Turandot sits weeping, Zelima beside her. Outside, the shrill voice of Punchinello is heard singing to the twang of stringed instruments:

O Lady, Lady, let fall your tears
No more, no more, for foolish fears,
But let in your true playfellow;
For Sorrow's a thief
Brings Love to grief,
But a merry heart makes him mellow,
And a merry heart, O, a merry heart
Never yet kept fond lovers apart,
Nor pinched the shoe of their Punchinello.

TURANDOT

[*Savagely*]

Drive them away, Zelima! Drive them away!

*See Appendix.

PUNCHINELLO, SCARAMOUCHE, AND PANTALOON

[*Singing together outside*]

And a merry heart, O, a merry heart
Never yet kept fond lovers apart!

ZELIMA

[*Going to the door, puts her head out*]

Begone!

[*She returns to Turandot. The twang-ing outside decreases, but still continues*]

Take courage, Lady.

TURANDOT

Oh, I have lost
Courage and faith and kindness. All is dark —
Dark and disgrace.

ZELIMA

'Tis no disgrace to win
A husband.

TURANDOT

Win him! — To be tricked and sold
In slavery to one I love not — lose
The one I love, and truckle to the word
Of an upstart — a false, masquing popinjay
Of an emperor! — Yet, no disgrace! Ah me,

Why did your little dagger fail me? Now
I have no pluck of soul to try once more.

ZELIMA

The gods forbid! 'Twere very wicked, Lady:
And him, that saved you, and gave back your free-
dom
So gentlemanly!

TURANDOT

Ha! and caught me again
With his own riddle! Heaven, I hate him. Yet —
Zelima, did you see his eyes?

ZELIMA

[*Nodding*]
Most strangelike
They were.

TURANDOT

I must not think upon his eyes,
Or I might hate him less. No, only one
Of all men wears the gazes which I love,
And he is lost to me.

ZELIMA

Why lost, my Lady?
The emperor promised you to search the city
And find your beggar.

TURANDOT

Capo's promises
Are like himself — all lies. Nay, I must answer
This false Khan's riddle, or be doomed to-morrow
But how? — "His true-born name, his father's
fame —"
Where shall I find the clue? Ah, heartless fate
And stony hearted men!

THE VOICE OF PUNCHINELLO

[*Sings outside to the instruments*]

O Lady, Lady, lift up your moan
No more, no more 'gainst hearts of stone,
But let in your blithe playfellow!

TURANDOT

[*Wildly*]

Go! Stop them

THE VOICE OF PUNCHINELLO

For a stubborn will
Makes Love to be ill,
But a merry heart makes him well, O
And a merry heart —

ZELIMA

[*Opening the door*]

Stop
Your noises!

PUNCHINELLO

[*Outside*]

—O, a merry heart
Never yet kept fond lovers apart,
Nor tweaked the nose of their Punchinello.

ZELIMA

Cease! Her royal highness orders —

PUNCHINELLO, SCARAMOUCHE AND PANTALOON

[*Pushing past Zelima, enter the room bearing bright Chinese lanterns, and singing in chorus*]

A merry heart, O, a merry heart
Never yet kept fond lovers apart!

[*Joined by Harlequin, they pause together before Turandot and, pointing simultaneously their left toes, strike sharply their instruments with a sweeping bow*]

TURANDOT

What fresh presumption of your brazen lord
Is this?

PUNCHINELLO

This is our homage, Lady, Lady!

[*Thrumming their instruments again they accompany a dance of Harlequin, who by his pantomime indicates to Turandot the bowl of gold fishes while Punchinello lilts shrilly:*]

And thus our Harlequin: He's showing
How all our hearts be overflowing
With little, lovely, golden wishes
For your delight — as fine as fishes!

TURANDOT

Go — go!

[*Harlequin draws back*]

Why have you come?

PUNCHINELLO

To celebrate
Our lord Sir Capo's great discovery.

PANTALOON

[*Mysteriously*]

He's found.

TURANDOT

Who's found?

SCARAMOUCHE

[*Darkly*]

By the yawn of Jonah's whale
We have disbellied him from Pekin's maw
And blackest hollowness.

PUNCHINELLO

He's trapped, my Lady!

TURANDOT

[*Chafing*]

Will you tell *who?*

PUNCHINELLO

[*In a loud whisper*]

The beggar.

SCARAMOUCHE AND PANTALOON

[*Sepulchrally*]

Hush!

TURANDOT

[*Faintly*]

A beggar!

SCARAMOUCHE

[*Speaks at her ear*]

The louse-gray mongrel with the chalkish beard —
We've got him kennelled, ha!

TURANDOT

An *old* man?

PANTALOON

[*Nodding*]

Pickled!

TURANDOT

Alas! What are these tidings? Have you searched
Only to find an old poor man?

CAPO.

[*Who has entered behind them*]

They found
Your beggar's gaffer, Lady. — Barak he
Is called, and lies imprisoned now below,
Where I will learn from him about your lover.

TURANDOT

[*Bitterly*]

So *you* come too. Have you, then, come to break
Once more the vow you made?

CAPO.

[*Quietly*]

A single day,
Lady, you swore me faith and loyalty;
Yet in one little hour you cast away
Your faith, to call me traitor.

TURANDOT

Had I cause,
Or no?

CAPO.

Is there good cause to break an oath?

TURANDOT

You broke your own. You vowed to achieve for me
Joy — joy, and perfect marriage with my love. —
Am I, then, joyful? Am I with my love?

CAPO.

A single day; a single day, I said!

TURANDOT

So by to-morrow I must wed this Khan,
This nameless prince — unless I guess his name.

CAPO.

Why not, then, guess it?

TURANDOT

[*Glancing quickly*]
How?

CAPO.

[*Indulgently*]
Will you renew
Your broken allegiance?

TURANDOT

I am desperate.
I will do anything to free myself. —
What shall I do?

CAPO.

First swear me faith again.

TURANDOT

I swear it. Now tell!

CAPO.

How easily ladies swear
When they are in love! — Prime-Minister, retire!

[*The four Maskers, bowing, withdraw to the background, where they are entertained by Zelima, whom they instruct to play upon their instruments with a low strumming*]

In the general practice of my specialties,
Lady, I often recommend for love
A sleeping-charm — like this.

[*Capo takes from his sleeve a small vial and hands it to Turandot*]

TURANDOT

What should I do
With this?

CAPO.

This, if 'tis poured upon the sleeping lips
Of man by a maid, or maiden by a man,
Will make the sleeper murmur in his dream
Whatever secret thing his soul conceals
When it is asked of him.

TURANDOT

[*After a pause, gives a sudden cry of joy*]

Ah, now I see!—
But how can I find access to this Khan
When he is sleeping?

CAPO.

I am emperor,
And by my new régime, at midnight, all
The guards retire, and in the men's hall, men
May pass unnoticed by the others.

TURANDOT

[*Searchingly*]

Men?

CAPO.

[*Calls, beckoning*]

Here, Harlequin! — I pray you, princess, stand
Back to back with this boy.

[*Turandot looks puzzled, and then turns and stands back to back with Harlequin. Capo measures their heights with his flattened hand. They separate and Capo indicates Harlequin*]

A hair's breadth higher.

[*With a questioning glance at Turandot*]

A hair's breadth! Will you risk it — by a hair?

TURANDOT

[*Growing suddenly radiant*]

O wonderful! — At midnight, did you say?

CAPO.

[*Smiling*]

Now are we friends — and may I kiss your hand?

TURANDOT

[*Ardently*]

No, I will kiss yours!

[*She seizes Capo's hand and kisses it. He laughs softly*]

Curtain

SCENE II: *A bedchamber, mysteriously lighted. The room is vast and magnificent. In the centre, by a divan couch, Calaf is seated in deep brooding.*]

CALAF

If she should guess! — If she should fail to guess!
If she should fail to guess! — If she should guess!
O endless, awful night, you are like thought —
Hollow, unanswering and full of echoes!
And like my heart you, too, are sleepless, yearning
With dim and palpitating mystery.
If she should guess? — Then would I doubly lose
My love — my life. If she should fail to guess?
Then how might I dare hold her to my bond
And wed against her will? — If she should guess —
If she should fail — Ah, God! The night gives back
Only my emptiness, and moment builds
On moment mountains of hell, and here I sit
Alone.

[*Rising, he reaches his arms with a low cry*]

Alone!

CAPO.

[*Entering in the dimness*]
There is no loneliness
Where thoughts are merry.

CALAF

[*Staring at him for a moment*]
Merry! — Sire, I have
Forgot the meaning of that word.

CAPO.

Recall it,
Then, quickly, for I bring you pleasant news.

CALAF

[*Eagerly*]
From her? from *her*, O Sire?

CAPO.

From Turandot.
The lady loves you.

CALAF

Loves me! You are mad,
Or jesting.

CAPO.

To the sober-serious
Jesting's a sort of madness. — But no matter.
The lady loves you none the less.

CALAF

How is it
Possible?

CAPO.

You've forgot my specialty
So soon? — or am I skilled in guessing riddles?

CALAF

I should have failed without you.

CAPO.

Will you try me
Again?

CALAF

But how —

CAPO.

Come hither in more light.
[*Calaf moves out of the deeper shadow. Capo tips Calaf's face upwards, examining it*]
What color are your eyes?

CALAF

I do not know.

CAPO.

[*Nods approvingly*]
Sapphire. — That might describe them, with some license
Of love and rhetoric.

CALAF

What have my eyes
To do with guessing riddles?

CAPO.

Much to do!
They have to close and go to sleep, before
The guessing. Softly now: lie down and close ther
Until tomorrow.

CALAF

Would I might!

CAPO.

Then do so!
For on tomorrow morn, I promise you
Delight — and perfect marriage with your love.

CALAF

O friend, I am too weary to refuse.
I will lie down and dream it is tomorrow.

[*He lies on the couch. A far chimin*
is heard]

What bell is sounding?

CAPO.

Midnight. — Merry dream

[*Capo steals out. Calaf closes his ey*
and is still. The room is silent an
dim. After a few moments, out

the darkness there emerges, scarlet and pied, the Figure of Harlequin, who tiptoes toward the couch. At a sigh from Calaf, the Figure starts back, returning more reticently. Again Calaf murmurs in his sleep:]

CALAF

Turandot! Lady beloved!

[*Standing in a shaft of vague light, the Figure of Harlequin lifts cautiously a vial and, unstopping it, dances softly three times around the divan; then pauses close to Calaf, who murmurs once more*]

Princess! Love.

THE FIGURE OF HARLEQUIN

[*Chants in a low voice*]

Reveal, O dreamer: What is he,
His true-born name,
His father's fame,
Who, desperate for love of me,
Assumed from far Beloochistan
The false name — Keedur, Khan!

[*Bending above the dreaming form of*

Calaf, the Figure sprinkles from th
vial upon his lips; then draws bac
and listens]

CALAF

[*Murmurs louder in his sleep*]
Be gracious unto me: Calaf, the son
Of Timur, King of Astrakhan!

THE FIGURE OF HARLEQUIN

[*Laughing silverly*]
Aha!
Calaf! Calaf, the son of Timur, King
Of Astrakhan!

CALAF

[*Starting up on the divan*]
Who calls me?

THE FIGURE

[*Lifting a mandolin strung from th*
shoulder, strikes a swift chord an
bounds away toward the door]
Ahaha!

CALAF

[*Leaping to the floor, and following*]
What are you? Stop!

[*The Figure pauses*]

Come from your shadow!

[*The Figure takes a timid step forward, and stops*]

You!

You, the dumb player, servant of our lord
The emperor! What brings you here?

THE FIGURE

Aha!

Reveal, O Lady: What is he
His true-born name,
His father's fame —

CALAF

How's that? Can the dumb speak?

THE FIGURE

Calaf, the son

Of Timur — hail!

CALAF

By heaven, a spy!

[*He springs toward the door. The Figure tries to pass him but, thwarted, leaps back*]

Not yet!

You shall not go till I have plucked the face
Out of that mask.

[*At the door he turns the key and take*
it]

The door is locked. Reveal
Yourself!

[*The Figure draws away. He stride*
toward it. It escapes]

Light footed imp! Now by my soul,
You shall not live to blab beyond these walls
The secret you have stolen from my sleep.

[*He starts again toward the Figure. I*
dances away from him, striking th
strings of its mandolin. Round th
great couch and about the shadow
room he pursues it, ever eluding him
Suddenly he pauses, and stares]

Stay! Am I, then, asleep? Are you indeed
Some imp of dreamland, sent to plague my soul
With fever shuttle-dances, a pied phantom
Painting the dark, and tinkling with your timbre
These rafters of my riddle-tortured brain? —
If she should guess — If she should fail to guess! —
O Night, it is your Echo, mocking me:
'Tis but a Question, and beneath that mask
There are no lips to answer!

[*Desperately, he throws himself down b*

the couch, burying his face against it. After a moment, the Figure approaches, cautious, surveys his prone form closely, bends as if to snatch at his robe, but draws back and stands hesitant; then with a gesture half frightened removes its mask, and speaks low]

THE FIGURE

Calaf, son

)f Timur — grace! Give me the key!

[*Turning, Calaf slowly staggers to his feet, gazing with awe on the face of Turandot*]

CALAF

O Dream!

)ream of my love transmuted to a boy —
) little dream in motley, speak once more!

TURANDOT

'he key! Unlock the door, and let me forth.

CALAF

Ay lady — and her voice! Yet, shining boy,
Before my soul loses belief in you,
till let me wonder, looking on your image,
nd worship at your shrine — Saint Harlequin!

[*He kneels before her*]

TURANDOT

I do not ask for worship — but a key.

CALAF

The key you ask for locks the gate of heaven
And we are shut within. Love builds him bars
To stablish heaven where lovers are locked in.

TURANDOT

Lovers? You dare much.

CALAF

[*Rising*]

He dared more, to say
You love me, and I dared believe.

TURANDOT

[*Amazed*]

Who dared
To say it?

CALAF

He who shuttles through our lives,
Unriddling and riddling, like a restless loom —
The motley emperor.

TURANDOT

Capocomico!
He is a jester, Sir.

CALAF

Did he, then, jest
To furnish you that vial in your hand
And charm the fateful secret from my lips
Into your power? Ah, if you do not love me,
Why have you stolen here now to drag my name
From dreams — Calaf, your father's enemy,
Doomed unto death?

TURANDOT

[*Struggling with herself*]
Nay, ask not.

CALAF

Turandot,
Princess of Pekin, stoops not to betray
Her enemy, nor steal a riddle's answer
Thiefwise by night, to slay her enemy.
The thought is slander. No! — Therefore you love me:
So you have robbed — to save me.

TURANDOT

Turn your eyes
Away!

CALAF

Is it not so, Lady beloved?

TURANDOT

Oh, ask not with your eyes!—Nor with your thoughts
Ask not why this bold Harlequin is here
Thiefwise by night, to steal your secret name;
But let me go!

CALAF

[*Holding out the key, gazes at her*]
Will you, then, go?

TURANDOT

[*Reaches for it, but pauses and turns back her hand, screening her face*]
Your eyes!
They blind the space between. I cannot grope
The key I reach for.

CALAF

Will you go?

TURANDOT

The air
Is dim, but bright with pathways to your face,
And where they lead I falter, like a moth
To where the lamp shines.

CALAF

[*In hushed triumph*]
You will stay!

TURANDOT

O dark!
What light and darkness and the murmur of waters
Lure me toward you?

CALAF

Night and yearning stars
And rush of winds blend us, beloved. Listen!
Look in my eyes, O love! — Lean to my lips!

TURANDOT

[*Closing her eyes*]
I lean: Let me not fall!

CALAF

Thus will I save you!
[*Reaching his arms passionately, he kisses her*]

TURANDOT

[*Starting back, with a cry*]
Ah me! I am betrayed.

CALAF

By Buddha, I swear —

TURANDOT

Destroyed. O shame of all my vows forsworn,
Where have I fallen?

CALAF

On your lover's heart.
Look, it is I.

TURANDOT

Who's there?

CALAF

Calaf, your prince.

TURANDOT

Calaf! — Now shame put acid on my lips
And sere them of your kiss! A prince hath touched me!
O you poor bloody heads on Pekin's wall,
Have you, then, died for this? — and Turandot
Shamed by a prince at last!

CALAF

Lady, I beg —

TURANDOT

Not that! — Ah, do not stab me with that word,
And make me bleed for one who *begs*. — The key,
Give me the key!

CALAF

Mistress, your words go by me
Like leaves blown wildly. I cannot gather them.

TURANDOT

Sir prince, I blow them wildly, and I care not
Whither they whirl.

CALAF

Love changes blood to wine.
The kiss of our communion hath turned wine
To madden you.

TURANDOT

The key!

CALAF

[*Giving her the key*]

Take it, my lady,
So you may know your freedom and my love,
And me your lover, Calaf.

TURANDOT

Calaf, not
My lover. — Calaf, or Keedur, Khan, you are
Mine enemy in my power. — Until to-morrow,
Good-night!

[*She hastens toward the door. Grasping her arm, his eyes glow passionately*]

CALAF

You came here to betray me? — Speak!

TURANDOT

I came to win your secret, and to shame you
Tomorrow at the trial. Let me pass.

CALAF

No! We are in each other's power. Let doom
Strike on us both together.
[*Inexorably he compels her. She sinks on the couch*]

TURANDOT

In your power!
What, I? You would not dare —

CALAF

Who would not dare?
Infinite ages climbed to this little moment;
Infinite ages shall sink after it.
I stand here on its peak to make it mine. —
Open the door!

TURANDOT

[*Trembling*]
Open it? — What will you do?

CALAF

Now shall the rafters of your palace ring
With "Turandot, the Harlequin, Calaf's lover,
Stolen to his arms beside his midnight couch!"

TURANDOT

[*Shrinking from his gesture*]

Touch me not!

CALAF

[*Seizing her*]

Wine! Your kiss turns in my blood
To wine of fire poured foaming, and the flames
Burn outward toward your lips.

TURANDOT

Kiss not again!
Be merciful, and hear me!

CALAF

Mercy cries
To God, not to our enemy. — Your lips!

TURANDOT

[*With fearful appeal*]

My lover, then!

CALAF

[*Drawing back amazed*]

Your lover!

TURANDOT

Yea — my love!
Your eyes — *another* blazes in your eyes.

CALAF

Another! Who?

TURANDOT

The noblest in this world:
I love him. I have sworn it. Yet — O Yet —
My flesh cries out to yours, my soul to yours,
My lips, my lips to yours.

CALAF

[*Clasping her*]

Ha, mine at last!

TURANDOT

[*Repulsing him*]

Clasp me not, lest I cling to you. — No more!
I *will* not. I am his. No kiss of yours
Can quench his burning image. Let me go!
But ah, the spell and rapture of your arms —
Reach them where yearning lovers starve in hell,
And bless them. — Stop! My body and soul are *his*.
I hate you — I hate you — hate you!

[*She rushes into the dark.*

Calaf reaches — groping — with a wild cry.

Curtain

ACT FOURTH

ACT FOURTH

The scene is the same as the second act, scene second, except that the back of the great hall of the emperor's Divan is now hidden by a decorated curtain. The assembly is gathered as before: Capocomico, Turandot and Altoum seated on their larger and lesser thrones.

Before them, Harlequin, Scaramouche, Punchinello and Pantaloon are performing a dance.

At its conclusion Capocomico rises, and addresses the Maskers.

CAPOCOMICO

Enough! Go, bring the nameless prince before us.
[*Dismissing them with a gesture, he turns toward Altoum*]
Altoum, — our greater emperor, the Sun,
Sits higher even than our august selves,
And soon shall set his throne at highest noon.
Then must I abdicate my one day's reign,
First having sealed your daughter's perfect marriage,
Ending in joy her doleful year and a day.

Therefore, in those brief minutes which are left n
To consummate these little things, I pray you
Deign of your courtesy to take my seat
And let me do the honors.

ALTOUM

[*Rising from his lesser place*]

As you will!

Till noon, my thanks for hospitality.

CAPO.

Oh, not at all!

[*Pointing to his seat*]

Pray, make yourself at home.

[*As they pass each other to change place*

Altoum speaks to Capo in lower voic

Have you performed your task, and saved your head

CAPO.

My head was never more attached to me.

TURANDOT

[*Bending from her throne*]

A word, my liege?

CAPO.

Nay, but a hundred, lady!

[*He goes to her side. She speaks to hi*

low]

TURANDOT

Have you kept faith with me? Ah — is he found —
My heart's desire?

CAPO.

Your heart's desire is found,
And waits for you.

TURANDOT

[*Excitedly*]
Where is he?

CAPO.

Lo, he comes!

[*Pointing toward the entrance, he goes to the lesser throne. With music of their stringed instruments, the four Maskers usher in Calaf, haggard and dishevelled. Turandot starts, with a cry and look of bewilderment at Capo. Capo addresses Altoum and the Divan*]

Your Majesty and lords, the nameless prince
Awaits to learn his name from Turandot.

CALAF

[*Stepping forward fiercely*]

He waits not, for his name has been betrayed
To her — and you, false jester, have betrayed it.

ALTOUM

[*Amid commotion*]

What's that?

CALAF

My liege, why should I play the fo
In a Masker's comedy? Death holds less scorn
Than being duped to dance in a puppet-show
To tinkling mandolins.

ALTOUM

Speak out your grievanc

CALAF

I stand here in your power, and his. — At midnigh
By secret sprinkling of a sleeping-charm,
This masker sent to rob my dreaming lips
Of the answer to my riddle —

ALTOUM

Gods! to rob?
Your proofs of this!

CALAF

The proofs stand up in me.
I who did deem it heaven to love your daughter
Have proved it hell. Your daughter knows n
secret,
And all the ravage hidden in my name,

Yet am I nothing, my damnation — nothing
To her, who loves another.

ALTOUM

[*Startled*]

What — other? Who?

CALAF

"The noblest in the world." — O noble world,
Where aspiration earns its crown of scorn,
And baseness wins nobility! In such,
I'd liever be a beggar. But enough!
My fate indeed is nothing, and my name —
My name is —

TURANDOT

Stop! your riddle goes unanswered.
Go you in peace — and friendship. You, Sir Capo,
Who keep your faith so strangely, set before me
The heart of my desire.

CAPO.

He stands before you.

TURANDOT

Trick me not also. Keep your promise still.
This man is Calaf, Son of Timur, not
My heart's desire.

ALTOUM

[*Rising, wrathful*]

How! Calaf, Son of Timur!

CALAF

Not drowned my liege, in water — but in grief.

ALTOUM

My darkest enemy. — So, Capo, this
Is he whom you would wed within my house
To my own daughter — Prince of Astrakhan!
Now by my star, the doom upon his head
Shall fall on yours — and doubly. I, it seems,
I, too, am duped!

TURANDOT

[*Brokenly*]

He has betrayed us all.

CAPO.

A single day is short to make all snug.
The Lord took six.

ALTOUM

A single day is all
My word allowed. I see! You bungled, fool,
Striving to save your neck, but now your time
Hangs at the stroke, and you have failed me. Doo
Falls on you and your fellows!

THE MASKERS

[*Trying unsuccessfully to salaam*]

Mercy, Sire!

CAPO.

[*Behind his hand chiding them*]

Where are your manners, my Prime-minister?
Venetian bows are still the mode in court,
Whilst we are emperor.

[*Giving a sign to Harlequin, who runs out, he turns to Altoum*]

O Sire — elect!
Before the ominous gong sounds in mine ears
That ushers me unto oblivious rags
To stroll the world again, let me rejoice
That you have turned your wrath from this brave youth
Upon *my* humble head. — Congratulations!
And with exchange of courtesies, I pray you
Felicitate me and these fellow-players
On the happy curtain of our comedy.

[*At his gesture, Punchinello and Pantaloon run to the curtain at back*]

ALTOUM

Say rather — tragedy.

CAPO.

We stand corrected:
Or say — romance, where true love laughs through
tears:
Name it Romance, and grant us your applause.

[*Punchinello and Pantaloon draw the curtain, revealing an oriental altar, with idol, beside which stand two priests*]

ALTOUM

What's there?

CAPO.

The altar for our ceremony:
The Wedding of the Princess and the Beggar.

[*Reënter Harlequin, bringing in Barak, who rushes to Calaf and embraces him*]

BARAK

My prince!

CALAF

[*Overwhelmed*]
Barak — old friend!

TURANDOT

[*To Zelima*]

Look, look, 'tis he!
My beggar's gaffer.

ALTOUM

[*Before whom Harlequin presents three tokens*]

What are these?

CAPO.

Our trophies:
The secret of your daughter's malady —
[*Leading Calaf bewildered before Turandot*]
Lady, receive them with your heart's desire:
A ring, a rose, a beggar's wallet.

TURANDOT

You —
Are *you* my beggar?

CALAF

[*Taking from Barak his old cloak*]

I am he who won
In Astrakhan — this rose, at Pekin gate —
This ring, and in this ragged beggar's cloak
You once did smile upon, I now depart.

TURANDOT

Stay, love — *You* are my noblest in the world!

[*Calaf turns in wonder and kneels to her. She bends and embraces him. A great gong resounds*]

CAPO.

[*Presenting his crown to Altoum*]

My liege, I abdicate. And you applaud?

ALTOUM

Yea, marvel, Capo. Kingdoms will I give
To these your fellows.

THE MASKERS

[*Bowing Venetian*]

Hail!

ALTOUM

And to yourself —
Whate'er you ask for.

CAPO.

Then, my liege and lady,
I beg — this withered rose.

CALAF

[*Giving it to him*]

Only a flower?

CAPO.

Lovers, that lives beyond its little hour
In memory. — Adieu! — My players, rule
Your kingdoms still in masks. — Now for the world!

[*Tossing his gorgeous emperor's cloak to Harlequin, he springs away in his tattered motley*]

TURANDOT

[*Calls after him*]

What seek you there?

CAPO.

[*Kissing to her and Calaf the withered rose*]

More roses and romance!

Curtain

END OF PLAY

APPENDIX

—

TURANDOT'S DREAM

TURANDOT'S DREAM

In the acted performance of this play, the third act commences with a scene which sets forth, wholly in pantomime, a dream of Turandot, representing — by suggestions of mystic light and sound — the state of her distracted mind, trying to solve the riddle of Keedur Khan.

The pantomime takes place in two imaginative settings — a mountain top and an oriental street — blending the one into the other.

Out of darkness first appears the outline of the dark summit, against a blue-gray radiance of sky. Etched upon this Zelima enters, like a shadow-phantom, beckoning. Following her to strange music Turandot appears, unsubstantial as shadow, painted opaque on the glowing background, like some silhouetted, featureless figure on an ancient vase, imbued as by magic with motion and antique gesture.

Bowing in awe above the brink of darkness, the figure of Turandot is led downward (and forward) into obscuring mists, tinged with green lights and gules. Out of the mist, voices — shrill, bizarre, bell-toned, menacing, mysterious — echo the words: "Khan, Keedur Khan, Khan, Khan!"

While the female forms grope below, the figure of Capocomico now appears on the summit, beckoning to his four maskers, whose shadow-forms gesticulate weirdly toward Turandot.

"Reveal, O Lady: What is he —
His true-born name,
His father's fame —?"

Through the interpretive music, the teasing words of the riddle are chanted by the varied voices, amid strange statuses filled with mocking laughter.

Lastly, alone, appears the shadow form of Calaf, w
follows the Maskers downward into the mist, searchi
with arms outgroped toward Turandot.

There, as the unreal forms pass and disappear, t
silhouette of Capocomico stands fluting on the mounta
top, while below echoes the basso and falsetto laughter
the Maskers, and the low taunting cry: "Keedur Khan!"

As this tableau shuts in darkness, there comes vagu
to light in the foreground a street scene. Here, at
gateway, beggars with yokes are huddled; before t
gate, a moving frieze of dream figures, noiseless, p
fantastically: Chinese soldiers, high stepping; Turand
again, downcast, gliding like a captive with Zelim
Calaf, swift searching in pursuit; the Maskers, lit
grotesque, pointing after him; rearguarded by Capocom
— blithely dominant in gesture, triumphant with fanta

Last of the dream images he also fades in darkness, o
of which rise the merry strains of a chorus:

"O Lady, Lady, let fall your tears
No more, no more for foolish fears,
But let in your blithe playfellow ——"

and Turandot, sobbing beside Zelima on her bench in
harem, awakes from her haunting dream of Keedur Kh

Zelima bends over her.

"Alas, my lady, what ails you? You cried in your swoo

The merry voices of the Maskers outside sing louder.

"Oh, I have dreamed, Zelima! Drive them away!"

Thus follows the first spoken scene of Act Third,
here printed.

As acted, the stage management and lighting of t
pantomime have been movingly devised by Mr. J.
Huffman.

Here in description its visionary quality can only
suggested.

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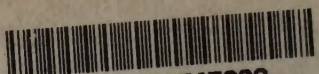
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